

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) An intravascular [[A]] catheter having a distal end and a proximal end, the catheter having a distal region proximate the distal end, the catheter comprising:

an inner layer extending from the distal end to the proximal end; and

a reinforcing braid layer disposed over the inner layer, the braid layer formed from at least two continuous wires woven together, the braid layer comprising a proximal braid section in which each of the continuous wires has a proximal ~~cross-sectional area~~ diameter, and a distal braid section in which each of the continuous wires has a distal ~~cross-sectional area~~ diameter;

wherein each continuous wire extends through the proximal braid section and through the distal braid section, and the distal ~~cross-sectional area~~ diameter of each of the continuous wires is about 1.0 millimeters and less than the proximal ~~cross-sectional area~~ diameter of each of the continuous wires is about 1.5 millimeters.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) The catheter of claim 10, further comprising an outer layer disposed over the reinforcing braid layer.

13-25. (Cancelled)

26. (New) The catheter of claim 10, wherein each of the continuous wires of the reinforcing braid layer includes a step-wise transition from the distal diameter of each of the continuous wires to the proximal diameter of each of the continuous wires.

27. (New) An intravascular catheter comprising:

an elongate shaft having a proximal end and a distal end, the elongate shaft having a proximal portion having a first flexibility and a distal portion having a second flexibility greater than the first flexibility;

the elongate shaft including a reinforcing braid layer formed of at least two continuous wires interwoven together, wherein the reinforcing braid layer includes a proximal braid section throughout the proximal portion of the elongate shaft, and wherein the reinforcing braid layer includes a distal braid section throughout the distal portion of the elongate shaft;

wherein each of the continuous wires extends through the proximal braid section and through the distal braid section;

wherein each of the continuous wires has a first cross-sectional area in the proximal braid section, and each of the continuous wires has a second cross-sectional area in the distal braid section, wherein the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the proximal braid section is greater than the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the distal braid section; and

wherein each of the continuous wires of the reinforcing braid layer includes a step-wise transition from the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires to the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires.

28. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 27, wherein the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the proximal braid section is a round cross-sectional area having a diameter of about 1.5 millimeters, and the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the distal braid section is a round cross-sectional area having a diameter of about 1.0 millimeters.

29. (New) An intravascular catheter comprising:

an elongate shaft having a proximal end and a distal end, the elongate shaft having a proximal portion having a first flexibility and a distal portion having a second flexibility greater than the first flexibility;

wherein the elongate shaft includes an inner layer, an outer layer, and a reinforcing braid layer disposed between the inner layer and the outer layer, the reinforcing braid layer formed

from at least two continuous wires interwoven together, wherein the reinforcing braid layer includes a proximal braid section throughout the proximal portion of the elongate shaft, and wherein the reinforcing braid layer includes a distal braid section throughout the distal portion of the elongate shaft;

wherein each of the continuous wires extends through the proximal braid section and through the distal braid section;

wherein each of the continuous wires has a first cross-sectional area in the proximal braid section, and each of the continuous wires has a second cross-sectional area in the distal braid section, wherein the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the proximal braid section is greater than the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the distal braid section; and

wherein the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the distal braid section is about one-third less than the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the proximal braid section.

30. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 29, wherein the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the proximal braid section is a round cross-sectional area having a diameter of about 1.5 millimeters, and the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires in the distal braid section is a round cross-sectional area having a diameter of about 1.0 millimeters.

31. (New) The catheter of claim 29, wherein each of the continuous wires of the reinforcing braid layer includes a step-wise transition from the first cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires to the second cross-sectional area of each of the continuous wires.

32. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 29, wherein distal braid section extends to the distal end of the elongate shaft.

33. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 32, wherein the proximal braid section extends to the proximal end of the elongate shaft.